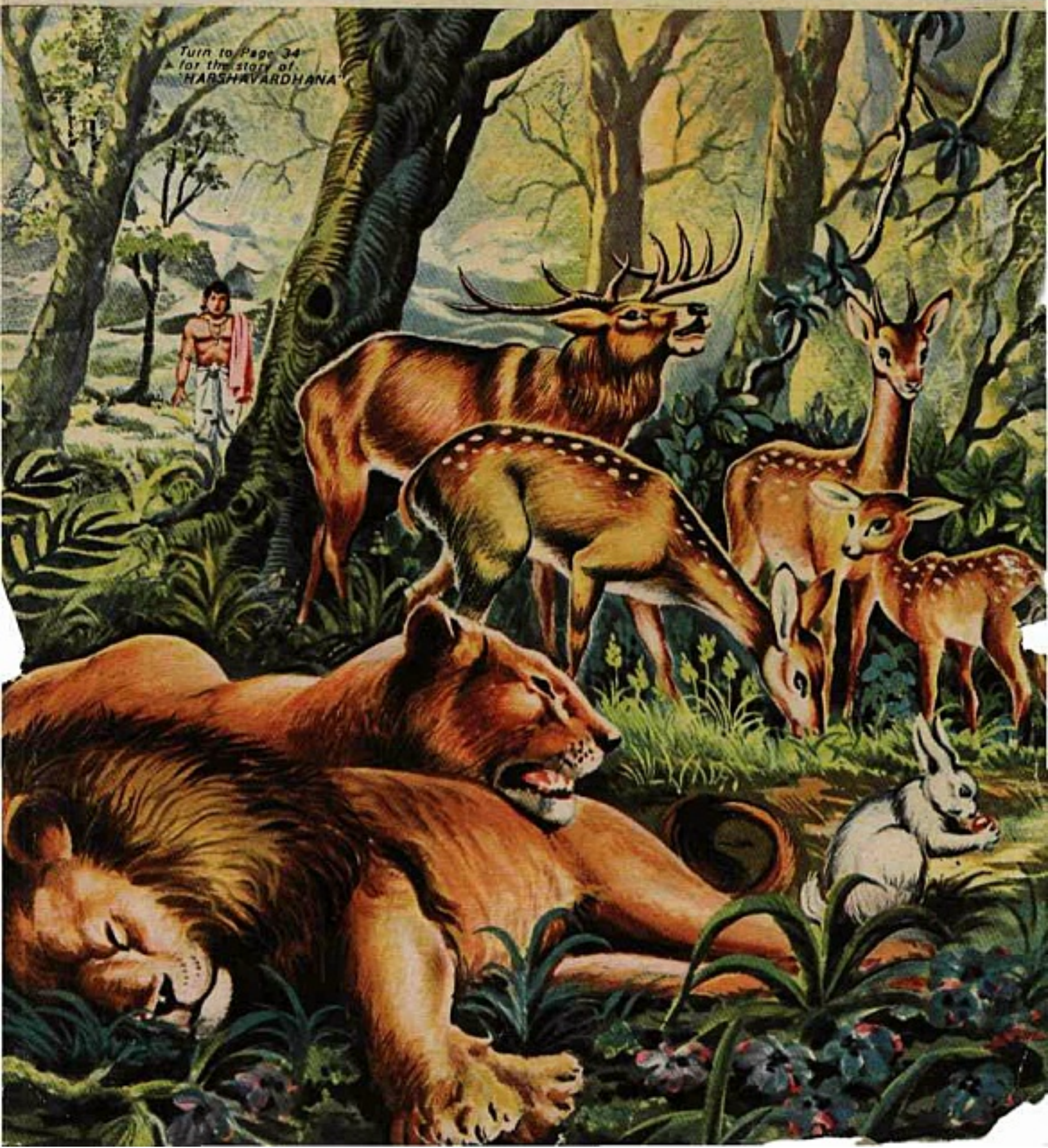


CHANDAMAMA

MARCH 1981

Rs. 1.50

Turn to Page 34
for the story of
"HARSHAVARDHANA"



Build a big castle
Up in the blue
Fill it with Gems
For me and for you.



Got a moment? Get a Gem!

Cadbury's
Chocolates

Anything's possible with Cadbury's Gems!

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- THE THIEF AND THE INNOCENT: An Arabian Night
story of a conscientious rogue.....Page 8
- THE LEGEND OF THE GOLDEN VALLEY: Continuing the
fairy-tale novella.....Page 10
- ADVENTURES OF PERSEUS: The first part of the great
hero's exploits.....Page 16
- A FOREST WITH A HISTORIC TREASURE: Ravi and
Raman out for an exciting discovery.....Page 27
- BAGHA JATIN: Heroic saga of a great son of
India.....Page 30
- HARSHAVARDHANA: Eventful career of a great king—
through pictures.....Page 35

PLUS FOUR COMPLETE STORIES
AND SEVEN OTHER FEATURES

GOLDEN WORDS OF YORE

कोऽतिभारः समर्थानां किं दूरं व्यवसायिनाम् ।
को विदेशः सुविद्यानां कः परः प्रियवादिनाम् ॥

Ko'tibhārah samarthānām kiṁ dūram vyavasāyinām
Ko videśaḥ suvidyānām kaḥ paraḥ priyavādinām

What is burdensome to the competent? What is distance
to a merchant? What is a foreign land to the learned? Who
is a stranger to one whose speech is sweet?

Chanakyaaneetih



Controlling Editor: NAGI REDDI

A REQUEST TO PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS

Does your educational institution bring out a magazine? If it does, it might be containing some well-written stories or articles by your students. You will surely like such pieces to come to the notice of a wider readership. The **Chandamama** is willing to cooperate with you in achieving this end.

As you know, the **Chandamama** circulates all over the country and beyond. It is fondly read by students in a large number of schools and colleges. We propose to devote a few pages to reproducing (after editing) some such articles from your magazine which could be enjoyed by students of other institutions. The **Chandamama** is in the right position to promote such a creative exchange.

Needless to say, the author of the chosen article, the magazine in which the article had been published, and the institution that published the magazine would all find due mention in the **Chandamama**.

Please send your publications to: Editor, the **Chandamama** (English), 2 & 3 Arcot Road, Madras-600 026.

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(batting)
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121-run first innings lead and without being least interested in chasing an outright victory target of 112 in 16 overs set Sunil Gavaskar's declaration of the Rest of India XI's second innings at 232 for five.

NEWS

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Message of the Season

John Lennon, the musical talent, once famous as one of the Beatles, fell to a murderer's bullet. To his numerous shocked admirers, this is the message from his wife, Yoko Ono Lennon:

"The only *revenge* that would mean anything to us is to turn the society around in time to one that is based on love and trust as John felt it could be...Guilt is not in the one who pulls the trigger, but in each of us who allows it."



Beware of "Second-hand Smoke"!

It is not enough to refrain from smoking which is dangerous for your health and mind, but you ought not to inhale the smoke discharged by a smoker by your side. A study by Japanese experts shows that "second-hand smoke produces a lethal first-hand risk of lung cancer."

FLASH

...stumps on the penultimate day. Having gained a first lead of 15. Kar... at 200 for Carlton... himself... Saldha... mind... the scores...

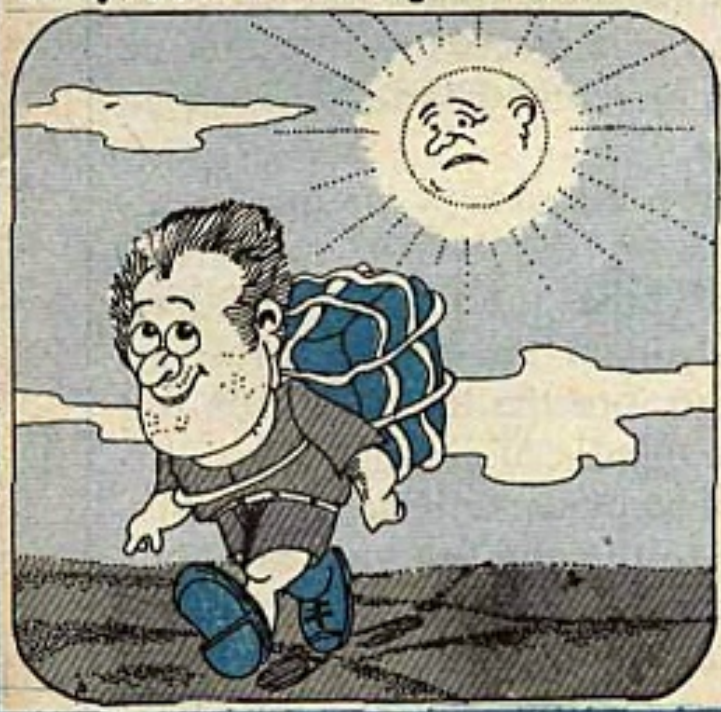
...quite interesting. Poona and H.S. points to 41, but it had a strong threat from... before winning 38 points (14-24) at half... put up a splendid... the third quarter and... the lee-way to... participants.

In the girls' South Korea took beating Japan... South... India qualified to second world championships for to be held next...

Marathon through Sahara

Jacques Martin (27), a French solar energy expert, crossed the Sahara, the world's largest desert, in 50 days, running for 3,300 km, covering 50 to 60 km daily, at the rate of 12 km an hour. It was an example in stamina and determination.

Sahara which in arabic means wilderness, stretches across Africa from the Atlantic coast through Egypt to the Red Sea and beyond, into Iran, and has an area of 56,35,000 sq.km and has always been a challenge to man.



A Property for your Pocket!

Beginning from the pocket diary to the pocket calculator, you have so many things suitable for your pocket. The latest property to go in it is a pocket typewriter designed by a Japanese manufacturer. Measuring 19.5 cm x 9.5 cm x 3 cm., it is a calculator too.



*The Arabian
Nights*

THE THIEF AND THE INNOCENT

him.

The miser relaxed in a tavern for half an hour. But he never loosened his grip on the bag. The thief found no chance for laying his hand on it.

When the miser got up, the thief hurried forth and reached the miser's home beforehand and hid under a bench on his verandah. It was dusk.

The miser, on reaching his home, sat down on the bench. He called out to his maid-servant to bring him water to drink. The maid-servant brought a tumbler and handed it over to him.

The miser kept his bag by his side on the bench and drank from the tumbler. The thief, still under the bench, thrust his hand into the bag and took out the bundle of gold.

The miser returned the tumbler to the maid-servant and then grabbed his bag.

As soon as the maid-servant entered the house, the thief crawled out from under the

There was a money-lender who was ruthless in realising his dues with heavy interest. He was a miser of the worst kind.

One day he was returning home after changing a large amount of his money into gold. It was convenient for him to hoard his wealth in the form of gold.

The gold he bought was bundled in a piece of cloth. He put the bundle in a bag and carried it.

Three thieves followed him. One of them said, "I can steal the miser's gold."

"Can you? Why don't you try?" the other two encouraged

bench and escaped through the gate at the backyard.

A little later his two friends met him. He proudly showed his booty to them.

"We can't give you any credit for your deed. We came by the miser's house. He is threatening his maid-servant with severe punishment if she did not return his gold. Since he saw no one else, he feels sure that it is she who stole the gold."

"Well, I must go to her rescue," said the thief.

He walked fast. Even before entering the miser's compound he heard his shouts. "I shall count hundred. If you do not return my gold before I have completed the count, I am going to skin you alive!" the miser screamed.

"Ho sir! Ho!" called out the thief.

The miser came out. "Sir, didn't you take rest in a tavern today?" the thief asked the miser.

"Yes, I did," said the miser.

"Did anything slip from the bag you carried?"

"Well, I have lost a bundle containing gold!" informed the miser.

"My master, the owner of the tavern, thought so. Is this that



bundle?" asked the thief, opening the bundle and showing its content.

The miser's face brightened up. "This is that. I thank your master and yourself," said the miser and he extended his hand to have it.

"Wait. How would my master know that I have restored this to you unless you give me a receipt?" said the thief.

"Just a minute. I shall write out the receipt," said the miser and he went in.

Instantly the thief slipped away. "Now the miser is convinced that his maid-servant is innocent," he told his friends.

THE LEGEND OF THE GOLDEN VALLEY

By Manoj Das

It was a moonlit night. Raju climbed rock after rock and pushed through the forest to the safety of the ruins. Since his father's imprisonment he had lost the mood to visit this desolate place. The dim track he had made by his frequent journey there had been covered by shrubs and leaning trees.

But, for Raju to push forward through them was as thrilling and no more difficult than swimming upstream. Soon he reached the familiar surface of a rock. He used to remain lying on that for hours, singing to flowers and talking to squirrels and butterflies. He sat down and did what he had had no time to do earlier: he wept over his father's death.

All was quiet but for the concert of the crickets and the hooting of an owl. An hour passed. Raju wiped his eyes and looked up, without meaning to look at anything in particular.

But he saw a radiant form

where he was accustomed to see nothing but the dark face of a crag. At first he thought that the moonlight was making fun by creating an illusion because his eyes were tearful.

He wiped his eyes again and looked, determined to see through the illusion.

Soon he realised that it was no false vision. A human figure indeed did stand gleaming in the moonlight. A portion of the crag had collapsed showing a cavern. And the cavern revealed the figure.

Raju advanced, and the farther he went, the more wonder-struck he grew. He found it impossible to take his eyes off the figure. It was so living that he feared he might disturb her gazing so lovingly at the lotus she held in her hands.

Raju felt his eyes getting filled to their brim with the beauty he beheld. He had never known such delightful sensation in his eyes. Neither did he know that

2. THE GRAND REVELATION

there could be so much joy and peace in just looking!

Then, in a flash he remembered the hoary legend of the Golden Valley. Surely, this was the statue the prince of a bygone age had made! Obviously the earthquake had exposed it.

Soon Raju had yet another strange experience. By and by he felt as if the statue had been quite known to him!

But there was no question of his seeing it beforehand though he wandered amidst the rocks and the ruins so often.

Had he by any chance seen a painting of the figure? But no painting or art of any kind was

encouraged ever since the new dynasty occupied the valley!

Raju touched the statue and was thrilled. He felt grateful. He tried to make out for whom he felt so. Was it for the golden statue?—for the serene moonlight and the august forest?—for the coincidence of his being there? Perhaps it was for all this and for something more—for the power that was behind all this.

Tears rolling down his cheeks, he ran his hand on the lotus and the delicate palms that held it. To his amazement, a ring from a finger of the statue slid on to one of his fingers!

His first feeling was that of a





shock, but a shock of surprise and intense delight. He sat down. He felt that he was passing into a dream—a strange and captivating dream.

But it was over in a moment. All that he remembered was, while he was in a wonderful world of light and delight, a voice asked him if he would like to know the secret of breathing life into the statue. "Yes, yes," he said eagerly. "Arrange for safeguarding the statue and step into the gorge behind the waterfall," directed the voice. "In a land beyond, you will see a deity. She would give the secret away to you. Moreover, you

can ask the deity for the boon of marrying the damsel that the statue would become!"

The boon of marrying the damsel? That would surely be more than his wildest dream could promise him. But what an exciting thing it would be to follow even a dream for bringing life to the statue!

He was ready to jump into the waterfall and pass beyond it that very moment.

It is true that nobody ever came out of the gorge that was screened by the waterfall. But somehow he felt sure that the voice would never betray him.

But first he must arrange for safeguarding the statue. Who but the king would be able to safeguard it?

Dawn was breaking out over the higher hill-tops. Raju looked at the face of the statue once more. "I shall return soon," he said and it seemed as if he saw a flicker of smile fleeting across the lips of the statue.

He had never felt so light while running. The first splash of sunlight had just bathed the portals of the palace and the guards before the parapet wall had just lowered their bugles when Raju stood before them.

"I wish to see the king!"

"See the king? Who the emperor you are that you expect His Awful Highness to be at your beck and call? We have sounded the bugle and done our duty. Now it is the sun's duty to rise to the level of the king's window to wake him up," said the chief guard.

Raju, without wasting a word more, pushed in.

"Stop!" thundered the guards about to take hold of him. But as their eyes fell on his face, they stopped themselves. They did not know why.

Several other guards and palace servants saw him. But they kept off him as cats keep

off a hound. Even Raju himself found it rather strange. Upon his asking about the king, someone even showed him the upstairs window at which the sun was to do his duty.

"King, sir, get up. Quick. There is splendid news!" he shouted.

"Hey! At least address him with a tenth of his titles—His Awful Highness the son-of-a-leopard-grandson-of-a-tiger-great-grandson-of-a-lion....."

"Hey, King!" cut in Raju.

Slowly the king's face emerged on the window. More than two dozen of men were hiding behind the pillars below. They expected an explosion of the





king's wrath. The boy, they were sure, was going to lose his head and they perhaps an eye or an ear each.

The king's face remained scowled for a while. Two of those hiding behind the pillars and peeping at him fainted. But strange, the colour of the king's face changed like that of a chameleon. "Shove the chap up!" he ordered.

In a few bounds Raju reached the king's bed-chamber. Nobody knew what transpired between the two. But imagine the surprise of all to see their king descending the stairs in a hurry, following Raju.

It is only then that everybody got a chance to have a proper look at Raju. Many of them had known him. They were stunned, for he looked so charmingly different! That explained why the guards and the king himself could not resist him.

"But, Your Awful Majesty..." the minister who had arrived in the meanwhile tried to speak to the king.

"Follow me, you imps!" said the king. The royal horse was still asleep and the king had no patience to wait. He plodded on behind Raju, gasping and sweating.

"My lord, why don't you visit the forest for picnicking, once in a while?" Raju asked in a bid to divert the king's attention from the travails of the journey.

"Why should I, you stupid boy? - A king is for the palace, not for the forest!"

"But to run through the wood, to splash the waters of the fresh spring on your face, to roll on the lush grass—this freedom—is this not exciting?"

"Freedom? I can take away anybody's freedom! What more freedom do I need? But tell me, you boy, why did you visit the forest?" the king demanded.

"How could the golden image

have been discovered had I not visited the forest? Look up." Raju stopped below the cavern and pointed his hand at the statue.

The king looked up, his hands resting on his waist. His posture remained unchanged for quite some time. His stare grew stern, he goggled. Then his eyes began to look red. He turned his gaze to Raju.

"Kidding me?" he sounded like the barking of a dog that had been kicked. "I see nothing excepting a hollow!"

"Your Awful Majesty, do you mean to say that you don't see the beautiful image, shining so brilliantly in the tender sunlight?" asked Raju, quite disturbed.

"I don't! I don't! I don't!"

"But how?"

"Because there is no image to

see! You youngster of a forest goblin, what business had you to trick me out of my bed when I was dreaming of being dressed up as a bridegroom? You mucked my morning. I'll kill you."

"My lord, you have been a bridegroom for umpteen times and have killed too not a few...."

But the king was in no mood to listen to him.

"In a hurry I put on slippers from two different pairs! I had no time to comb even my moustache—the first of the royal functions in the morning!" he howled, on the verge of wailing.

As the royal howl was reciprocated by a couple of jackals, the king's minister and five members of the Circle of the Wisest arrived with anxiety writ large on their faces.


(To continue)





LEGENDS AND PARABLES OF INDIA

WHEN QUALITY DISQUALIFIED



In a remote age the birds had chosen for their king the golden mallard.

The King Mallard lived in a region marked by ever-green trees abounding in flowers and fruits, small hills that served as his castles, and lakes that never dried up.


The King Mallard had a charming daughter. It was time for her to get married. The King Mallard would have looked for a match, but the daughter pleaded with him to be allowed to choose her bride-groom herself.

"Very well, my daughter, I shall arrange for all the eligible young birds to assemble in the valley. You can choose your mate from the assembly," said the king.

The daughter blushed trying to hide her excitement at the prospect of a *Swayamvara*.

The King Mallard's messengers flew far and wide inviting all the eligible young birds to assemble in the valley in front of the royal residence on a certain day.

A large number of birds who aspired for the hand of the princess in marriage collected



on the appointed day. It was a colourful gathering.

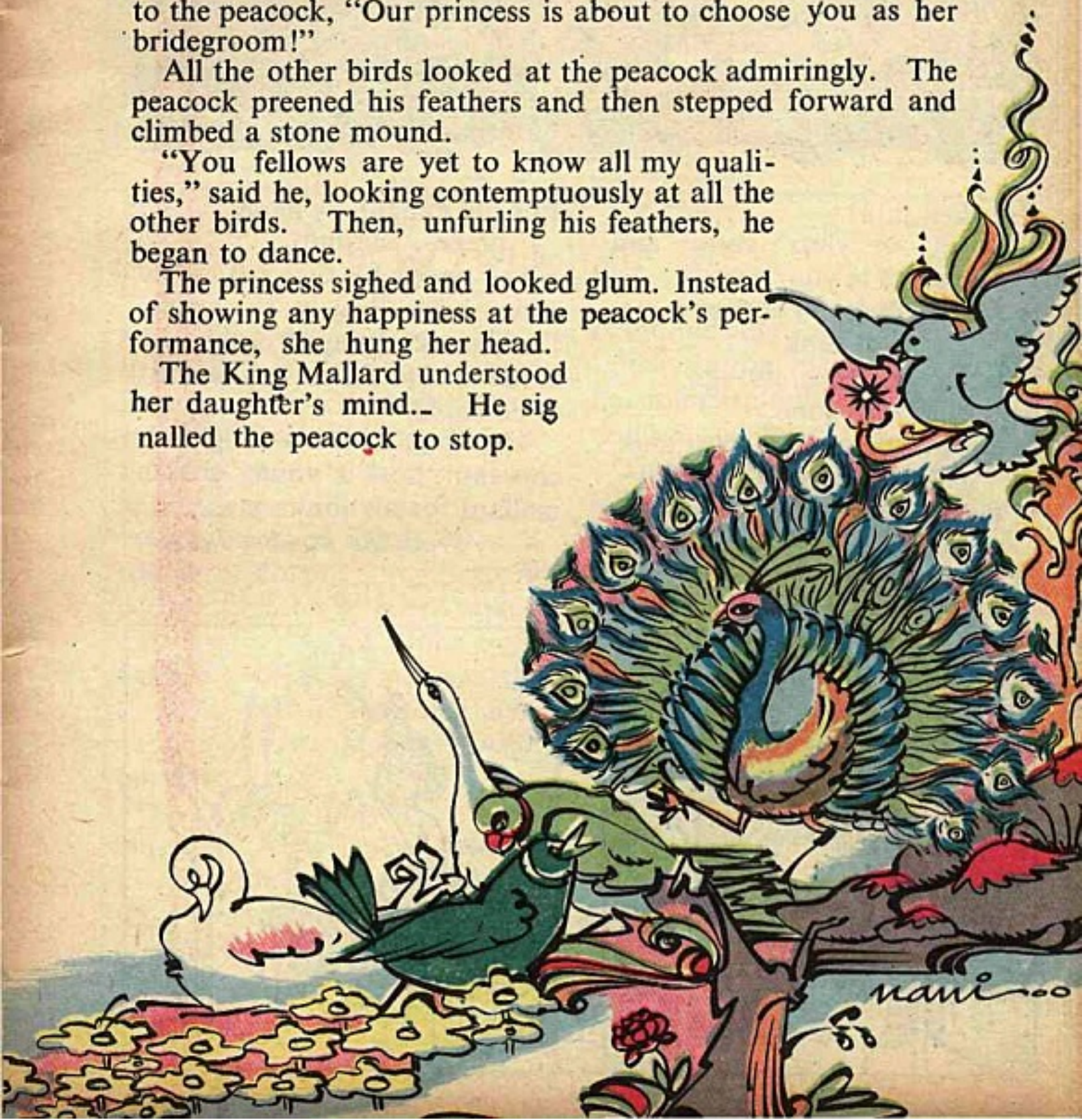
The King Mallard and his daughter, accompanied by the nobility, came out to the top of a hillock and surveyed the gathering. Soon the attention of the princess went over to the peacock and there it stayed! Her maids took note of this. One of them flew down into the gathering and whispered to the peacock, "Our princess is about to choose you as her bridegroom!"

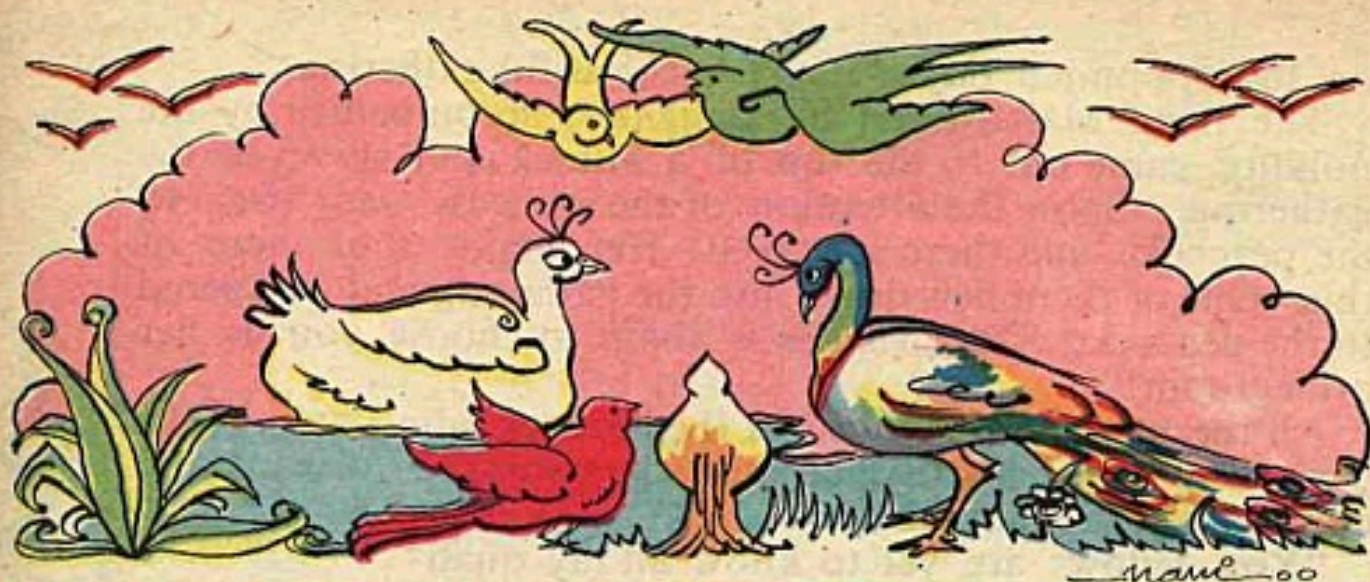
All the other birds looked at the peacock admiringly. The peacock preened his feathers and then stepped forward and climbed a stone mound.

"You fellows are yet to know all my qualities," said he, looking contemptuously at all the other birds. Then, unfurling his feathers, he began to dance.

The princess sighed and looked glum. Instead of showing any happiness at the peacock's performance, she hung her head.

The King Mallard understood her daughter's mind. He signalled the peacock to stop.





He then said:

Sweet is your voice and
smooth is your back,
Like lapis-lazuli is your
colourful neck
But your dance, though
otherwise good,
Shows you as immodest and
extremely proud.
Despite your wondrous
feathers, this sudden feat—

For my daughter's hand
makes you unfit.

The peacock's face fell. The
other birds began to giggle.
The peacock jumped down and
fluttered and flew away as fast
as he could.

The king, with his daughter's
consent, chose a young golden
mallard for his son-in-law.

From the Buddha Jatakas

WONDER WITH COLOURS





THE PRINCESS WHO HATED MEN

Long long ago a king named Vijay had a daughter named Ratna. When a child, Ratna was very fond of tales. One of the tales she used to hear from her nurse went like this:

In a certain forest lived a couple of doves. They lived in a cosy nest on a huge banyan tree along with their young ones. Once a great fire destroyed the forest. The dove-couple flew away but their dovelets were burnt to death.

The dove-couple wept for a long time. They lost all interest in life. They flew around the great fire crying over the death of their dear ones. When they were totally exhausted, they sat down on a branch, looking

at the burning forest.

"No use our living any longer. Let us leap into the fire and die," said the she-dove.

The he-dove agreed to do so. However, just when both would leap into the fire the he-dove changed his mind. "Wait, wait!" he cried. "Let us reconsider our decision." But the she-dove paid no heed to his cry. She jumped into the flames and was lost forever.

While concluding the story the nurse would say, "Never believe the male creatures!"

The princess, who heard the story with great attention, asked, "But what about the she-dove? It died, did it?"

"It died, but it was born as



our sweet princess, Ratna," replied the nurse, laughing.

Time passed. The nurse was no more. The princess grew up. But two ideas that remained deeply imprinted on her mind were that she ought not to believe a male creature and that she was the she-dove in her previous birth.

One day princess Ratna told the king, "Father, I wish to retire into the mansion that stands amidst our garden. My maids alone would guard me and serve me. No male inmate of the palace should be allowed into the garden."

"Why do you want to shun

the male inmates?" asked the king, affectionately.

"I hate all male creatures," replied the princess in a firm voice, "of course, excepting my noble father!"

"But what about your marriage?" said the king.

"Never shall I marry," answered the princess.

The king laughed. But he made all arrangements for the princess to live in the secluded mansion in the garden.

One afternoon two young men were spied upon by Ratna's maids inside the garden. "How dare you come here? Get out. You seem to be strangers. Perhaps you are ignorant of the rule that men are not allowed into this garden," screamed the maids.

"What a pity that such a lovely garden should be forbidden to us simply because we are not women! Who owns this?" asked the young men.

"Princess Ratna. She hates men," replied the maids.

The two young men left the place quietly. Outside the wall they exchanged glances. "Is this not a queer situation?" said one of them. "It is so," said the other.

Of the two one was a prince

and the other his friend. They were travelling from land to land for sake of knowledge and experience. They decided to probe into the situation and, if possible, to cure the princess of her queer attitude to men.

Soon they found out the house of the flower-maid of the palace. Under the pretext of learning about the flowers available in the king's garden they talked to her and endeared themselves to her.

"We hear that your princess is rather ugly!" observed the prince.

"Shut up! Who the liar told you so? Our princess is beauty nonpareil. But no man is lucky enough to see that beauty!" asserted the flower-maid.

By and by the two friends introduced themselves to the flower-maid. She was delighted to know that they were determined to try to cure the princess of her hatred. She agreed to help them in every possible way.

The prince and his friend learnt why the princess developed the hatred. They discussed for a long time and hit upon a plan. The prince knew a little of magic. From a turban he could whip up a few doves, a bunch of flowers, and even a rabbit. He



put them back in the turban and wore the turban. After a while his friend suddenly pulled the end of the turban. The turban unfurled. All saw a few yards of white linen. But nobody knew what happened to those things.

The flower-maid whispered to the princess, "A great magician is on a visit to this town. What a pity that you cannot see his performance. Just as you refuse to see men, he refuses to look at women!"

The princess loved magic. She was excited. She ran to her father and proposed that the visiting magician be asked to show his magic in the garden.



She would see the performance hiding behind the screen.

The king sent his messenger to the magician. The prince, his friend and the flower-maid met the king privately and told him all about their plan. The king nodded and agreed to give them a chance.

The magic was duly performed in the garden. The princess witnessed the show from behind the screen. When the play was over, as tutored by the flower-maid, the king asked the prince, "Young man, why do you refuse to look at women?"

The prince stood in silence, his head hung. The king repea-

ted his question.

"Your highness, I was silent because it will be a sin to utter a lie before a king. Now that you have repeated your question, I feel obliged to tell you the truth. In my previous incarnation I was a dove. With my wife and children I lived happily in a forest. Once a big fire destroyed our children. My wife and myself decided to end our lives in the fire. But just as we would jump into the flames, my wife escaped. I called out to her again and again, but she was not there to answer me. I died alone. Reborn as a human being, I have not been able to forget the past life. I hate women because of my wife's conduct.

"It is most amazing!" exclaimed the king.

"Indeed, my lord, I never thought that my wife would be so very fickle-minded. I'm afraid, all women are like that," commented the disguised prince with a sigh.

Suddenly the screen parted. The princess sprang forward. "You are a liar. I died, while you escaped!" she shouted.

The disguised prince cast a stern look at the princess. "So, you are here, reborn as a prin-

cess!" he muttered gravely. Feigning to be angry, he then said, "Are you not ashamed of your conduct? I was just asking you to wait so that we could pray together to meet in the next life; but you flew away!"

"How dare you say I flew away? Did I not leap into the fire instantly? Is it not you who escaped?" demanded the princess.

"Escaped? Did I not jump into the fire when I failed to locate you?" asked the prince.

There was a lull! Then, said the princess in a soft voice, "Probably I misunderstood you. Please excuse me."

The prince took a step towards the princess and said politely, "I too should apologize to you. I failed to see you jumping into the fire because of excessive smoke. It was

wrong on my part to think that you escaped."

"Well, well, it was a case of misunderstanding on both the sides. Now that the position is clear, where is the difficulty in the two coming together in this life?" said the prince's friend, stepping forward.

"It is an excellent proposal!" commented the minister and many others.

The prince remained in the palace. As the princess talked to him, her hatred for men slowly died down. One evening the prince confessed to her all he had done to cure her of her wrong idea about men. Luckily, the princess took no offence at his confession, for she had already set her heart upon him.

Well, the marriage was performed on the earliest auspicious day.



A FOREST WITH A HISTORIC TREASURE

When Shyam Gupta proposed that they be out for a drive into the outskirts of Bombay, Ravi and Raman were not quite enthusiastic. The city was a beehive of attractions. What could be there in the outskirts for them to see?

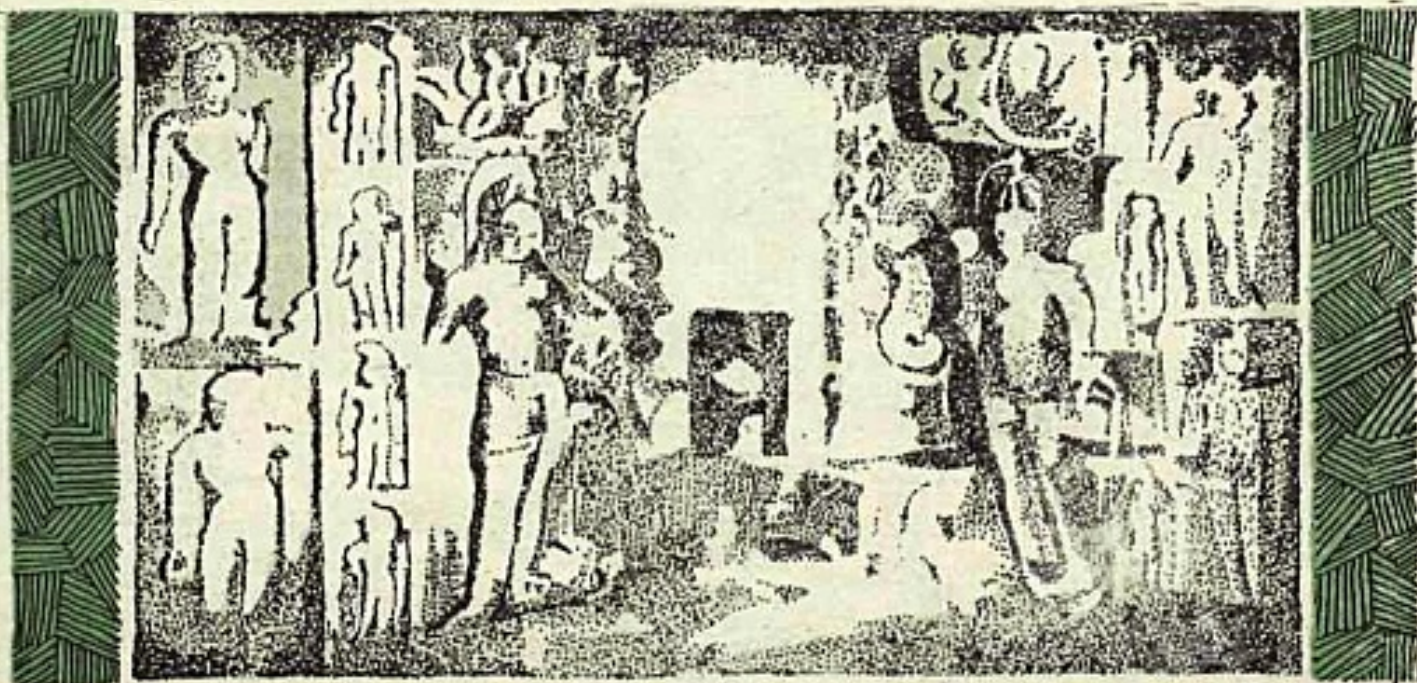
But the westward drive proved interesting. The road was broad and the suburb had many pleasant sites. After about 40 kilometres they took a diversion to the right and entered a lush forest.

"Boys, this is one of India's national parks," said Shyam Gupta as he bought a ticket

from the guard at the entrance. That entitled them to drive into the park.

The air suddenly became cool. The silence was deep. It was a welcome change from the hullabaloo of the city. Soon the boys understood why the air was so cool. There was an expansive lake in the forest. They parked the car and walked over its embankment. To their right spread the calm water. To their left was a deep valley jammed with tall trees.

They sat on the embankment for a while. "One falls in love with the silence here," Ravi



whispered to Raman who was engrossed in looking at the meditative trees below.

"Today we are accustomed to live in cramped city apartments, and are still not quite sure of our safety. Think of people who chose to live in these atmospheres!" commented Shyam Gupta.

"Did ever people live here?" asked a surprised Ravi.

"I am taking you to the place where they lived and meditated—so many of them—in days gone by," replied Shyam Gupta.

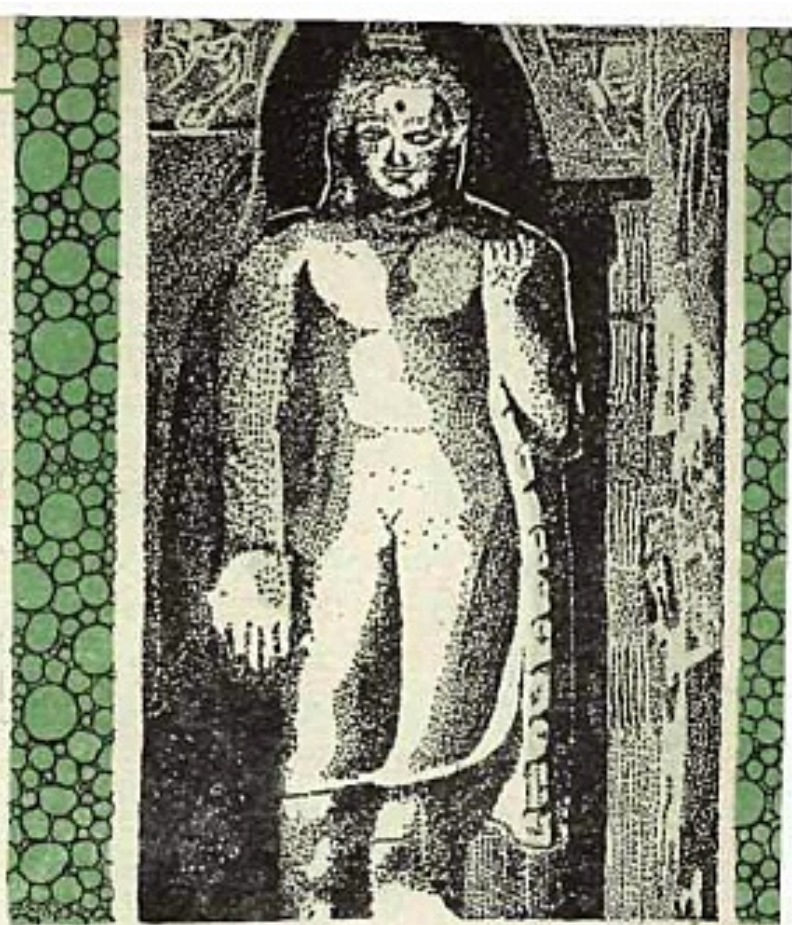
They were in the car again. In a few minutes they were approaching an elevated spot protected by an enclosure.

They parked the car and walked along the ascending path. A range of hills was now fully visible and what attracted their attention was a row of spacious caves.

"Where have you brought us, uncle?" asked Ravi.

"To Krishnagiri. Few remember this name today. It is popularly known as Kanheri. Generations of Buddhists lived and meditated in these caves for hundreds of years, from A.D. 1st century to 9th century.

They stood before a pair of spacious caves.



CHAND

"How many could have lived in these two caves?" asked Raman.

"Not two caves. There are one hundred and nine caves. It will take a long time to see all of them. But many of them are rich with splendid sculptures. Once it was a famous seat of Buddhist learning. In 2nd century the Greek traveller Ptolemy visited this place. Let us move along, glancing at some of these dwellings," said Shyam Gupta.

He led the boys on. Bats crowded one of the caves. The boys were amused to learn that they were of a rare variety—bats with beards!

On the walls of a cave could be seen huge figures of the Buddha. There were small stupas too.

The caves were of different sizes and some of them were divided into rooms—for study and for sleep. One cave was a large hall, perhaps designed for the assembly of the residents.

Although the sculptures and inscriptions in many caves had decayed, in many others they were intact, showing episodes in the Buddha's life and pictures that helped to understand his teachings. Cave no. 90 was particularly fascinating, with the pictures of a furious elephant, a lion, a serpent, a fire, and a ship-wreck.

On higher levels tanks had

been devised to store the rain water. There were tunnels to carry them down to the caves below. It was planned very well.

They reached the top of the hill. The sun was setting beyond the forest.

"So many seekers of peace and bliss must have sat here in a remote past. Let's sit down for a moment in silence after their example," proposed Shyam Gupta.

They sat looking at the orange west. They did not know when a full hour ticked away. A quiet evening was setting in. The forest that spread before them was getting blurred under a soft fog.

"It's time to go." Shyam Gupta got up. So did the boys.



CHANDU



The Secret

In a certain village lived a merchant. He had two sons, Sudhir and Shyam. Once while the younger son was away the merchant fell ill. He realised that his end was nearing. He told Sudhir in confidence, "I am departing to the other world. Take care of yourself and Shyam. Do your best to keep him with you. I'm afraid, he'll be ruined if he separates from you."

Shyam's wife saw her father-in-law whispering to Sudhir. But she could not hear their conversation.

Soon the merchant breathed his last. Shyam was back in time to participate in his funeral rites.

A few days passed. One day Shyam's wife asked her husband, "Has your elder brother told you about the secret your father passed on to him?"

"Secret?" Shyam was surprised.

"Yes. A lot of it. I saw your father whispering to your brother for a long time. Most probably he passed on to him the secret of some buried property," said the young lady.

"I don't think so. Had that been the case my brother would have already told me!" commented Shyam.

"How naive you are! Who does not know that greed for property makes even the holy ones take to deception!" Observed his wife.

Shyam tried to forget his wife's suspicion, but could not. One day he asked Sudhir, "What is it that father whispered to you on the eve of his death?"

"Whispered? His voice no doubt had grown very faint. Well, he desired us to live to-



gether in peace.” answered Sudhir.

Shyam nodded, but he did not quite believe his brother. He grew more and more restive. “Brother, what if we separate?” he put the proposal at last.

Sudhir got a shock. “Let me think about it,” he said. Shyam’s wife had confided her suspicion about the buried property to an old woman. The old woman brought it to Sudhir’s notice privately. Sudhir felt sad and thought that it would be right for him to separate. But his father’s parting words echoed in his mind. He decided to do his best to keep the home united.

He collected from his wife all her ornaments and carried them to another merchant, his friend. “Will you please lend me ten thousand rupees against these ornaments?” he asked the merchant.

“Why do you need the money so urgently?” his friend asked with some surprise.

Sudhir told his friend all that had happened and what his plan was. His friend gave him the money, but refused to accept the ornaments.

Sudhir put the money in a casket and buried it in his back-yard late at night. Next day he told Shyam, “Look here, father had told me about some money that lies buried. I should have told you earlier. But a desire to own the whole amount alone induced me to keep it a secret from you. Something strange happened last night. Father’s spirit chided me in my dream for my greed. It said that it is because of my selfishness that you want a separation from me. It directed me to give the entire buried wealth to you. Come, let us dig out the wealth.”

Shyam smiled. “Is that so? Is it not rather strange that father’s spirit should tell me something different in my



dream? It scolded me saying that due to my stupid suspicion you offered to pledge my sister-in-law's ornaments to your friend, the merchant! The money you want me to take is lent to you by your friend!"

Sudhir was surprised. He did not know what to say. Shyam suddenly burst into tears and said that it was Sudhir's friend,

the merchant, who had met him at night and had revealed what Sudhir was going to do in order to keep the house united.

"How noble you are, brother!" exclaimed Shyam. His voice was choked and he was going to fall at Sudhir's feet. But Sudhir stopped him and embraced him.

They lived together happily.

SPOT THE TEN DIFFERENCES



BAGHA JATIN

It was a winter morning. Many villagers were yet to step out of their homes. Some men, who had been to the nearby field, were seen coming back at great speed. Panic was writ large on their faces and they shouted, dying for breath, "A tiger, a big tiger!"

A tiger in the village was no joke. Some people shut their doors; some called their neighbours to get ready to go out, in an armed group, to scare the tiger away.

But one bare-bodied young man jumped to the street. "Where's the tiger?" he demanded to know as he advanced towards the field. All he had for a weapon was a small knife.

Hardly five minutes had passed when the villagers heard a shout and a roar from the field. Some people who had no knowledge of the tiger's presence were passing by the field. What they saw made their blood creep.

The young man was locked in a wrestle with a tiger. It was a large beast indeed—the

famous Royal Bengal Tiger!

Some of the witnesses were on the verge of swooning away. But, after its last terrific roar, the tiger fell sprawling on the ground. The young man sat on it, bleeding, but smiling.

Only in fairytales had people heard of such bravery. They called the young man *Bagha* or the tiger-like.

But Jatindranath Mukherjee had proved that he was not just tiger-like, but far more than a tiger.

He had proved this once when he saw hundreds of men and women running for life before a fearful horse that ran amok. He sprang up before the horse and brought it under his control and handed it over to its owner. He was then a mere school-boy.

Another time when an Englishman riding a horse found it great fun to go on whipping the passers-by, he reached the spot in a bound and snatched away the whip and brought it down on the rider's back. The fellow slunk away.

But Bagha Jatin was yet to

create a legend for himself. And that he created before long.

Two great personalities inspired him. They were Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo. Both were spiritual visionaries—and both were patriots. Bagha Jatin felt that for a spiritual rebirth of India what was needed first was the country's freedom from the British rule. He organised secret societies at several places and trained their members in various modes of fighting. His magnetic personality and selflessness drew a large number of youths to him.

His activities worried the British rulers. The police arrested him and tried their best

to prove that he was organising sedition. But nothing could be proved. He was set free.

With redoubled vigour he prepared for a rebellion. A rebellion could not be carried on without arms. He sent his emissaries abroad. Germany was ready to help him. Soon the ship carrying the arms was out in the sea. From Calcutta Bagha Jatin secretly slipped off to a village named Kaptipada in a feudatory state in Orissa. The place was not far from the mouth of the river Budha Balang, near Balasore, a district town. There was a long stretch of solitude between the river and the sea. The German ship was to transfer the arms to Bagha



Jatin at some lonely coastal spot.

But, as luck would have it, the British came to know of the transaction. The British ship chased the German ship. When the German captain knew that there was no escape, he sunk all the arms in the sea.

The news reached Bagha Jatin. Instead of feeling any shock at the failure of his long-cherished plan, he said, "This is a lesson from Providence. To free India, we must depend on our own strength, not on any foreign help."

While Bagha Jatin was planning his next course of action, the Calcutta police were desperately looking for him. They received the hint of some mysterious people camping at Kaptipada. Spies roaming about in disguise informed the authorities that the campers were none other than the Bagha and his four lieutenants.

Some police officers of top rank mobilised a large force and one morning surrounded the Bagha's camp. They had dreamt of giving the revolutionaries a surprise. But the group had slipped away.

The officers, though disappointed, did not give up. The police ran in all directions and



also employed many villagers to run—raising a cry that a notorious gang of bandits was escaping. Those who could help capture them would receive ten thousand rupees as reward!

It was raining. The Bagha and his party ran for miles and miles, escaping the police-net several times till they reached the bank of the Budha Balang. They were tired and hungry. One of them went to buy some food from a small shop. They had no time to waste. The young man handed over a ten-rupee note for some stuff of much smaller value. That raised the shop-keeper's suspicion. Nearby stood a small



nam-oo

crowd discussing about the sensational bandits. Their attention went to the young men—who were seen carrying guns.

"The bandits! The bandits!" someone shouted. A chase began. The Bagha's party jumped into the river. Holding their guns and ammunition boxes in one hand each, they made rapid strokes with the other hand and reached the other side.

The District Magistrate, Kilby, was notified immediately. He and Sergeant Rutherford with batches of police and a company of army were there in no time.

The Bagha's party climbed an earthen mound. As protection they got some bushes and ant-hills. They took position, knowing fully well what was coming.

The advancing soldiers knelt along the slope before the mound and began shooting. The revolutionaries replied with surprising accuracy. Five youths faced several hundred English and Indian soldiers and sepoys and kept them at bay for 75 minutes, killing a number of them.

At last they ran out of ammunition. One English soldier climbed a tree surreptitiously and shot down one of the Bagha's lieutenants. Then the army and police stormed upward the mound.

One of the five had been killed and the other four badly injured. They were carried to the hospital in the town.

"I alone am responsible for all that happened. My lieutenants have only carried out my orders. Do not take revenge on them," were almost the last words of Bagha Jatin.

This great revolutionary breathed his last on the 9th of September, 1915, at the age of 35, in the hospital.



STORY OF INDIA—51

HARSHAVARDHANA

Fourteen centuries ago Thaneswar was a small prosperous kingdom, ruled by Prabhakarvardhana. He had two sons, Rajyavardhana and Harshavardhana, and a daughter Rajyashri. Rajyashri was married to Grahavarman, the King of Kanauj.

No sooner had the happy event taken place and Grahavarman returned to his city with his bride than the King of Malwa attacked Kanauj. In a bloody battle that took place Grahavarman got killed.



The victorious King of Malwa took Rajyashri prisoner and led her away in fetters. Before long the tragic news reached Thaneswar. Great was the shock of King Prabhakarvardhana and his sons.

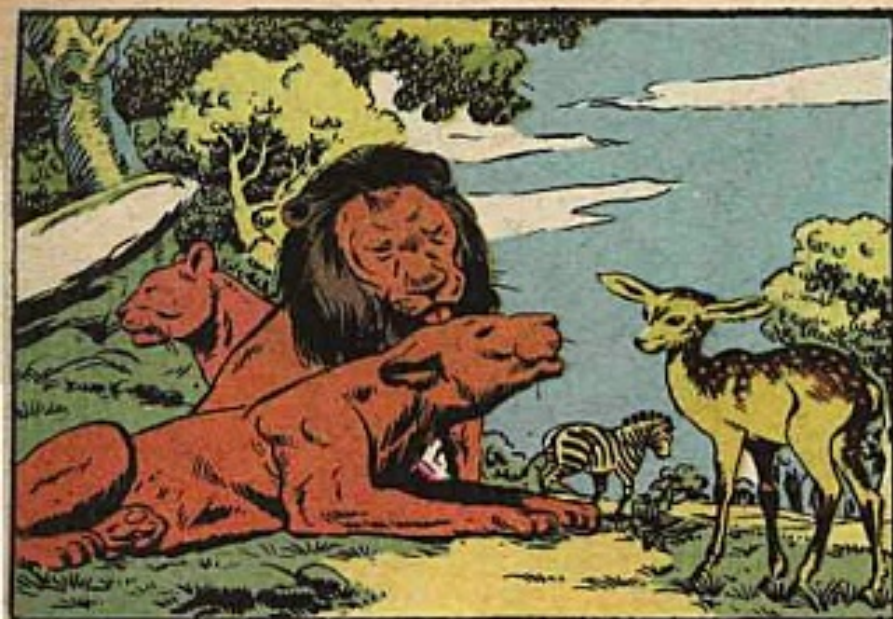
The elder prince of Thaneswar, Rajyavardhana, at once marched upon Malwa and defeated the enemy king. He rescued his sister, Rajyashri. Brother and sister shed tears and they began their homeward journey.



But Sasanka, the King of Gauda, who had a design on Kanauj and perhaps on Malwa too, suddenly pounced upon Rajyavardhana's party. Unprepared for such an attack, Rajyavardhana lost his life. In the melee Rajyashri escaped.

Amidst all these sad occurrences, King Prabhakarvardhana died at Thaneswar. The ministers and nobles obliged Harshavardhana to ascend the throne. At sixteen the prince became the king.





The young king lost no time in beginning a search for his sister. After much wandering, he entered a forest. In a certain area he was amazed to see some wild animals conducting themselves as peace-loving creatures.

He guessed that a great soul lived nearby. Soon he saw a number of hermits. They led him to their guru. One of the hermits brought the news of a woman preparing a fire in a remote part of the forest.



Harshavardhana and the sage rushed to the spot. Indeed, it was Rajyashri who had prepared her own funeral fire and was about to sacrifice herself in it. Harshavardhana and the sage reached just in time to stop her from doing so.

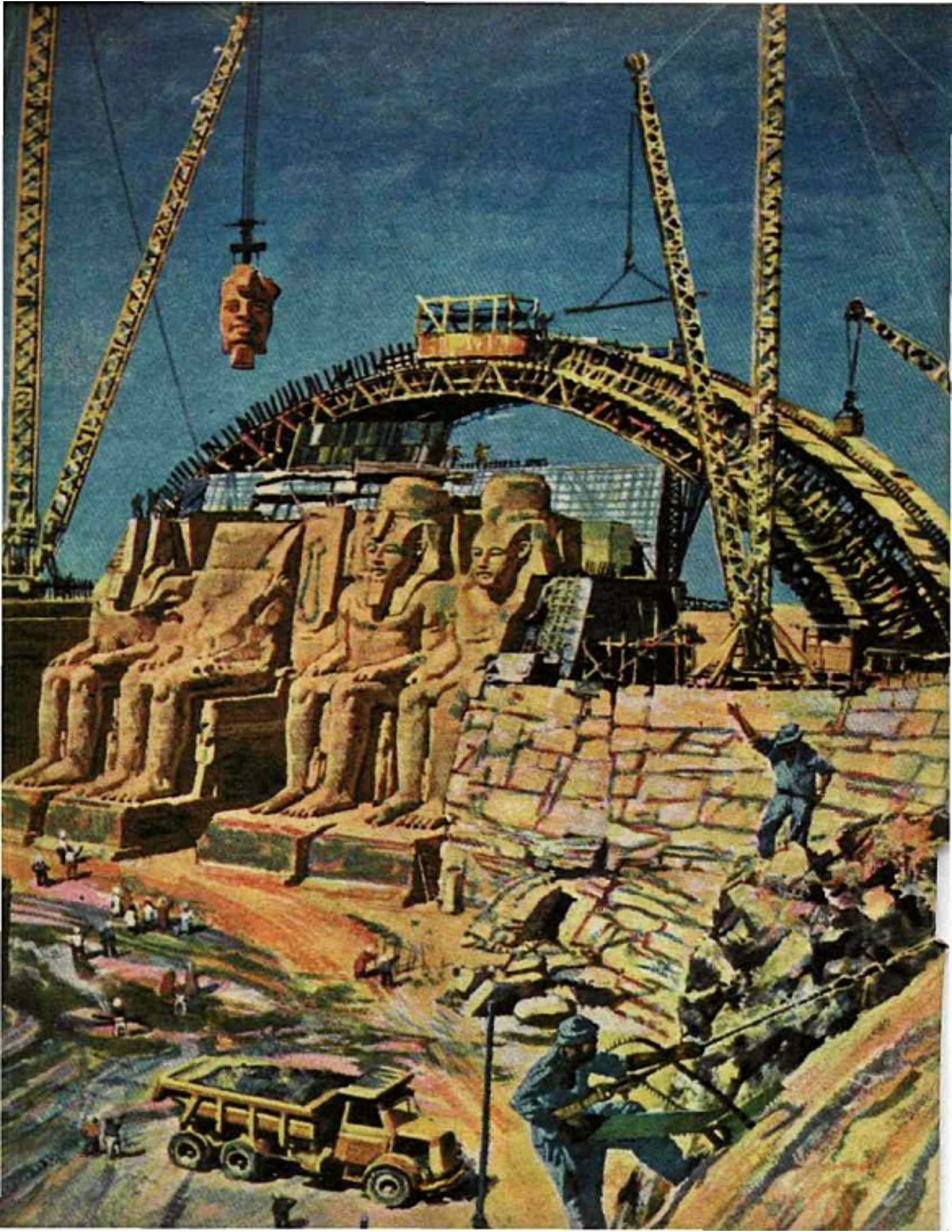
Harshavardhana persuaded his sister to live with him as his guardian. He promised to become an ascetic in future when both could come away to the forest and devote themselves to meditation.



Harshavardhana thereafter defeated the Gauda King who had killed Rajyavardhana. By and by he conquered many territories and became the ruler over a vast empire. He patronised various religious faiths.

Harshavardhana, at intervals, distributed his wealth among the poor and the pious. In one such alms-giving session, he gave away everything he had. He had to accept as alms a set of clothes from his sister himself!





MAN-MADE MARVELS

SAVING THE GIANT STATUES

***When the ancient temple and unique statues
were threatened by a dam!***

Sixty metres above the River Nile at Abu Simbel are four colossal statues of King Ramses II, who ruled over Egypt between 1304 and 1273 B.C. The seated figures are 20 metres high and stare out over the reservoir formed by the construction of the nearby Aswan High Dam with a serenity that suggests that they have been sitting there since the dawn of history. Thanks to 20th century technology that they are still visible.

These sandstone giants were made on the orders of Ramses himself. He built a great temple at Abu Simbel, whose entrance was guarded with the four figures carved out of the cliff face. Their sheer size makes them awesome even to-

day. Three thousand years ago travellers must have regarded them as the work of gods.

There came a time when the deeds of even the great King Ramses became no more than a memory. The sand blew in from the desert, and little by little the huge figures were buried and were forgotten. That they were eventually remembered in early last century was due to the work of an extraordinary man named Giovanni Belzoni.

Jack the Giant-Killer!

Belzoni was a physical giant. As a young man, he had studied hydraulics in Rome, but work being scarce he decided to become a monk. The mona-

stic life did not suit a man of his restless temperament. He became a vendor of sacred relics. This new job proved to be another disappointment. He made his way to England, where his huge stature secured him work as a pantomime giant in *Jack the Giant-Killer* in a theatre.

Once Belzoni met an agent of the Sultan of Turkey, who convinced him that a fortune awaited the man who could design an efficient machine for pumping water through the parched fields of Egypt.

Belzoni invented an irrigation machine that was very effective, but was ignored. Belzoni was penniless and almost starving when the Swiss explorer, John Burckhardt, needed his help in moving the fallen head of a huge statue from Thebes to Alexandria.

The unusual task was very much to Belzoni's liking. He successfully executed the project. Travelling down the Nile in 1812, he came upon the traces of some huge figures under the sand. He decided to investigate further, and found not only the great seated statues of Ramses II, but also the temple of Abu Simbel itself,

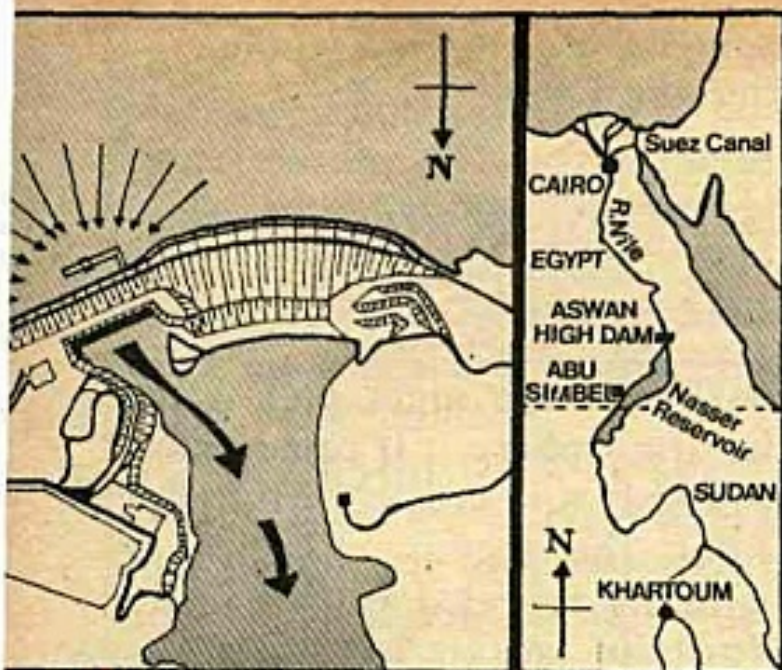
buried for centuries!

Belzoni excavated the great statues of Ramses and for the first time modern man was able to judge what marvels they were. They towered on each side of the entrance to the great temple. Around their feet were small figures representing Ramses' queen, Nefertari, and their children. The temple itself consisted of three halls that extended no less than 56 metres into the cliff, and its walls were decorated with more sculptures of the king.

In 1960, a gigantic project started, the High Dam at Aswan. It was intended to meet the country's need for water and produce 2,100 megawatts of hydroelectric power.

An artificial lake, 500 kilometres long, was to be made in which the flood waters of the Nile could be stored until needed. Unfortunately, it seemed inevitable that as the waters of the lake rose they would cover the great statues of Abu Simbel. Egypt desperately needed the 164,000 million cubic metres of water, but at the high cost of her national treasures.

Experts from all over the world discussed the problem,



and many solutions were put forward. One scheme, prepared by the French expert, Dr. Pierre Gazzola, recommended that the whole site be cut free of the cliff and, by means of hydraulic jacks, raised one millimetre at a time to the top of the rock. This novel scheme was considered technically sound, but too expensive to be practical.

Then Came the Solution

Other schemes were at hand. William MacQuitty, a Belfast film producer, suggested that the temple should be left where it was, but enclosed in a membrane of specially-cleaned water through which it could be

viewed by visitors even when it was deep beneath the lake. A member of the French Academy of Sciences wanted to free the temple from the rock and float it upwards as the lake filled.

Finally, the Swedish firm of VBB said that they were prepared to dismantle the temple and the statues, move the pieces to the top of the cliff, and reconstruct everything exactly as it had been before.

Compared with the others, this last scheme sounded somewhat crude, but VBB were told to go ahead. In fact, the work involved was extraordinarily difficult, requiring the dissection of 300,000 tonnes of fragile sandstone with serrated wires not unlike hacksaw blades, and then reassembling the pieces with the precision of a jeweller. Between 1964 and 1966 this work was carried out with complete success, and the great figures of Ramses and his temple now stand 60 metres above the original site.

And Giovanni Belzoni? After his work at Abu Simbel, he continued to make successful excavations in Egypt and crowned his efforts by being the first man to find the hidden entrance to the great pyramid at Giza.



*New Tales of King Vikram
and the Vampire*

PRISONER OF CIRCUMSTANCES

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained continuously and cracks of thunder shook the region. Flashes of lightning revealed fearful faces. Howls of jackals were at times subdued by eerie laughter of the ghosts.

But King Vikram swerved not. He climbed the old tree and brought the corpse down. But as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground, the vampire that possessed the corpse observed, "O King, I know not what opportunity you are seeking through this unusual labour of yours. Are you sure that you can make the right use of the opportunity when it is available to you? Well, there are instances of people craving for an opportunity, but only to give it up when it comes. Let me give you an example. Listen to my narration with attention. That ought to bring you some relief.

The vampire went on: A century ago Suraj Singh ruled

over Vinaypur. He was an unworthy king. He spent most part of the taxes the people gave him for his own luxury. His officers were worse. They exploited the people brutally and kept peace by threatening them with violence.

Once a year the king held an assembly of the learned men of his kingdom. The members of the assembly sang the king's praise and returned with handsome rewards. Their false praise flattered the king. He was happy. The officers only invited such men to the assembly who, far from being true scholars, were people ready to please the king for their selfish ends.

But there was only one man who proved a thorn in the way of the king and his officers. He was a bandit. He was popularly known as Bhimvir, whatever be his real name. He, with his few well-trained lieutenants, would confront the officers or wealthy merchants and loot them. The king tried to catch him, but all his efforts were futile.

One evening a scholar named Rohit Pandey was returning home from the king's assembly. He happened to pass by a lonely road with his bundle of re-



ward. It was night. Suddenly Bhimvir sprang up before him and demanded of him whatever he carried.

"Look here, brave young man, I'm a poor Brahmin. I maintain my family with the fees or rewards I receive for my priestly services. Must you deprive me of my humble earning?" asked Pandey.

"The reward you are carrying is a part of the king's ill-gotten wealth. You have no right to it any more than I have! The king is a tyrant. He exploits the common people," growled out the bandit.

"Can you stop the king's

tyranny by looting me? Why don't you take some step to free the country from exploitation by the king and his officers?" asked Pandey in a coaxing voice.

"How can I do that? I am not the king to take the officers to task!" protested Bhimvir.

Rohit Pandey laughed gently. "Young man," he said softly, "why don't you try to become the king? That, indeed, is a worthy object to achieve. Looting the people like me is not going to change the situation."

"To become the king! Is that really possible?" wondered

Bhimvir dreamily.

"Why not?" whispered Pandey. "Try and see. The good-for-nothing king has no friend. All are flatterers. I wish you all success. I can see that you are the sole man in the kingdom to have the manly courage. Glory comes to the brave. Your eyes sparkle with intelligence. Your muscles glisten with strength. Who deserves to be the king if not you?"

Bhimvir was immensely pleased. "Thank you, learned scholar, for your kind advice. You may go," he said, bowing to Pandey.

Thereafter instead of spend-

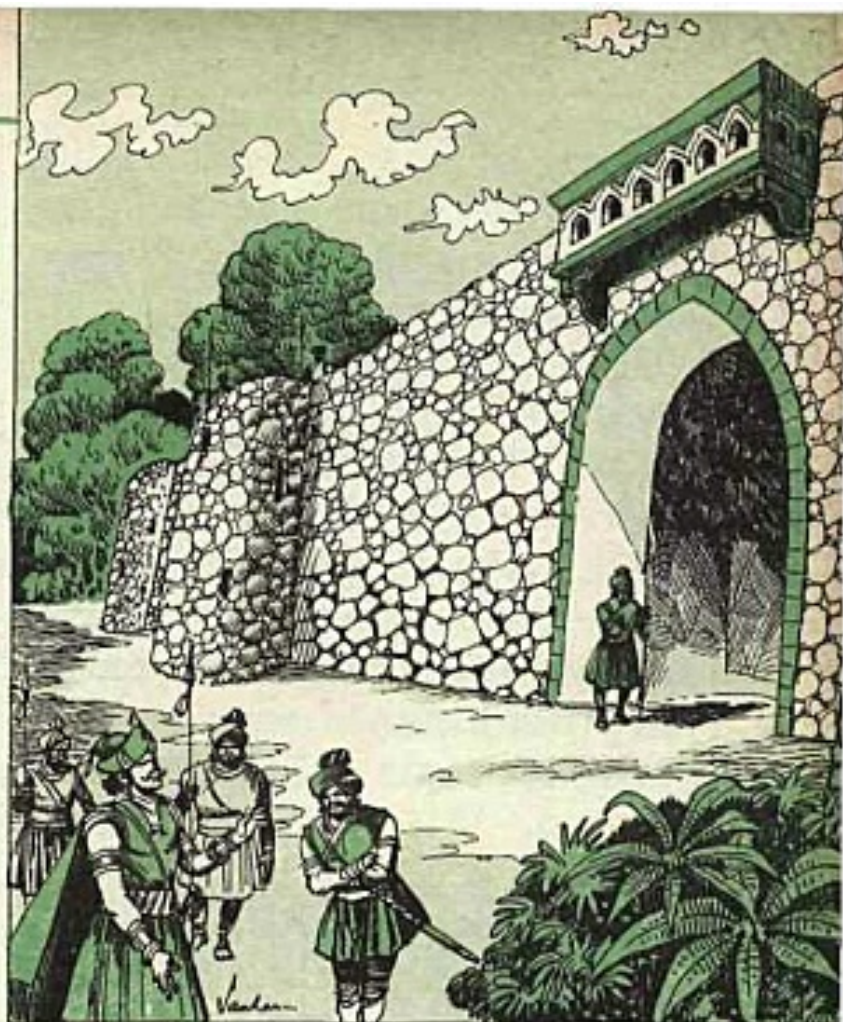


ing his time and energy on looting people, he conspired to snatch the crown from Suraj Singh. Disguised as a merchant he took residence near the king's army headquarters. He befriended the army officers, spending lavishly on them. His lieutenants bribed the palace guards and found out the secret passage into it.

One night Bhimvir threw a feast in honour of all the army officers, from the lowest rank to the highest. Their drink was drugged. By midnight all of them lay senseless.

Bhimvir, with his disciplined gang, gained entry into the palace through a secret passage. The king's bodyguards raised an alarm. But there was not a single army officer in his senses. Nobody came to the king's rescue. King Suraj Singh tried to defend himself, but fell to Bhimvir's sword. His young son was taken prisoner. The panicky inmates of the palace were allowed to flee.

Next day Bhimvir called the officers and the courtiers and declared his desire to be crowned as the king. Fear kept most of the noblemen of the court quiet. But one old Brahmin said, "O brave one, we know that King



Suraj Singh was a bad king. Now that he is gone, we ought to have a new king. But never has the throne of Vinaypur been adorned by someone whose ancestry was unknown. Pardon my impudence, but we cannot agree to your coronation!"

The old man's observation was greeted by soft supporting voices.

"Who says that this hero's ancestry is unknown? I know all about his noble forefathers. His great-great-great-grandfather was a cousin of the king of Sumantragarh. As you all know, the royalty of Sumantragarh hailed from the hoary

Lunar dynasty. Hence this hero is of noble lineage, perfectly fit for the throne," declared one of the priests.

The old Brahmin raised no more objection. Others too fell silent. The coronation took place with due rituals.

Bhimvir was pleased with the priest who claimed to have known his ancestry. He made the priest his chief adviser.

Days passed. The chief adviser said, "My lord, every king ought to keep the learned men of the land in good humour. Only they can, through their literary compositions, pass on your illustrious name to the future."

"Please do whatever is necessary to honour the learned," said Bhimvir.

The assembly of scholars was convened. At the end of the deliberations King Bhimvir distributed rewards to the scholars. Among the invitees was Rohit Pandey. He jumped the queue and told the king, "My lord, I have to hurry back. As you know, the road I have to take is quite lonely. Recently a bandit has appeared in the nearby forest. I ought to reach home before it is dark."

Bhimvir gave a start. His

face fell. He continued to distribute the rewards, but without any more enthusiasm.

At night he set Suraj Singh's son free. He called the ministers and presenting the prince to them, said, "Crown him as the king tomorrow. Do not try to look for me."

At midnight he galloped away. He was not heard of again.

The vampire paused for a moment. Then, in a challenging tone, he demanded of King Vikram, "O King, what is it that made Bhimvir give up the throne? Answer me if you can. If you keep mum despite your knowledge of the answer, your head would roll off your shoulders!"

Replied King Vikram at once: "Bhimvir was a man with two different traits in his character. He was brave and he surely wanted to put an end to King Suraj Singh's rule that was marked by injustice. But he was also ambitious and he loved flattery. We ought not to forget that it was the sly Rohit Pandey who inspired the ambition in him to become the king. Pandey's means of doing it was flattery. It was another sly flattery by the priest that

silenced the objection of the old Brahmin. Thus, from the beginning, Bhimvir let himself become a prisoner in the hands of flatterers. He had done nothing to endear himself to the people. He had not gathered the support of any section of the subjects who could stand by him. He had to depend on sly and selfish people. That is why he readily agreed to convene the assembly of false scholars. His flatterers wanted to revive all the old practices.

"But basically Bhimvir was a good man. Pandey's statement that a new bandit had emerged sounded meaningful to him.

Just as he was looting the people as a protest against Suraj Singh's tyranny, someone else was perhaps doing the same thing as a protest against his tyranny. He found himself a prisoner of circumstances.

"This thought worked like a shock in him. He realised that he had no greater right to the throne than Suraj Singh had. A strong sense of guilt made him abdicate in favour of Suraj Singh's son.

No sooner had King Vikram concluded his answer than the vampire, along with the corpse, gave him the slip.





The Stolen Money

At night it was raining heavily. Ashok was going to bolt the door of his house when he saw a stranger standing on his verandah. As light focused on the man's face, Ashok gave a start.

"You are totally drenched. Please come in and change your clothes. I should request you to rest in my house for the night," Ashok said.

"Thanks," said the man in response. He came in. Ashok gave him his own clothes to change.

"Please share with us whatever we have for dinner and have a night's good sleep," Ashok said, spreading a bed in his outer room.

"Do not bother about my food. I had already had it just

before it started raining. It is enough for me if I have some rest," informed the man.

As soon as Ashok entered his inner apartment, his wife took him to task. "How do you bring strangers in? What if he burgles our house at night?" she demanded.

Ashok smiled meaningfully and said, "He is no stranger to me, though I may be a stranger to him. If any of us should suspect the other's motive, it is he who ought to suspect me. I am the burgler, not he!"

"What you are saying is a riddle to me!" commented his wife.

"Let me tell you everything frankly." Ashok inhaled a long breath and resumed, "I was out

to start a business in my younger days. A friend of mine was to run it; I was to finance him and assist him. Both of us went to the town. There, under some evil influence, my friend deceived me. He fled with all my money!"

"Oh God!" exclaimed his wife.

Ashok continued, "I was shocked. Not knowing what to do, I entered the forest. I sat on a rock remorsefully. My eyes fell on a traveller who was bathing in a spring. Behind him lay a box.

"If my friend could steal my money, why can't I steal a stranger's money?"—I asked myself. I stealthily moved forward and picked up the box. Silently I took a few backward steps. Once I was on the other side of the rock, I ran and ran till I was out of the forest.

"The box contained five thousand rupees. I started my business and today I am a well-to-do man. You must have guessed why I was so respectful towards tonight's guest! He is the man whose box I had stolen. I have never stopped feeling guilty about my conduct."

Ashok's wife looked amazed. "God has sent this man to you



so that you can be free from your feeling of guilt," she said. The couple then discussed what to do. They made a bundle of ten thousand rupees and hid it in their guest's bale.

They served the guest with a good breakfast in the morning. They learnt that he was a poor employee in a firm. The guest bade them goodbye after thanking them and was out on the road. Ashok smiled with great relief.

At noon Ashok heard a knock. He opened the door to find the traveller again.

"Sir, something strange has happened. As I opened my

bale on the river-bank preparing for a bath. I found a bundle containing a large sum of money. There was no money in my bale when I left my home. The bale was in your house. The bundle of money must have been yours and must have come into my bale by someone's mistake," he said.

Ashok broke into tears. The traveller was taken aback. Ashok then made him sit down and told him all about his stealing the box from the forest. "I want to repay you. Please do not hesitate to take it," he said imploringly.

The traveller heard him with rapt attention. He then said, "Sir, I remember having seen the box. You can be sure that the box was not mine, nor had I opened it to see what it contained. There were signs to

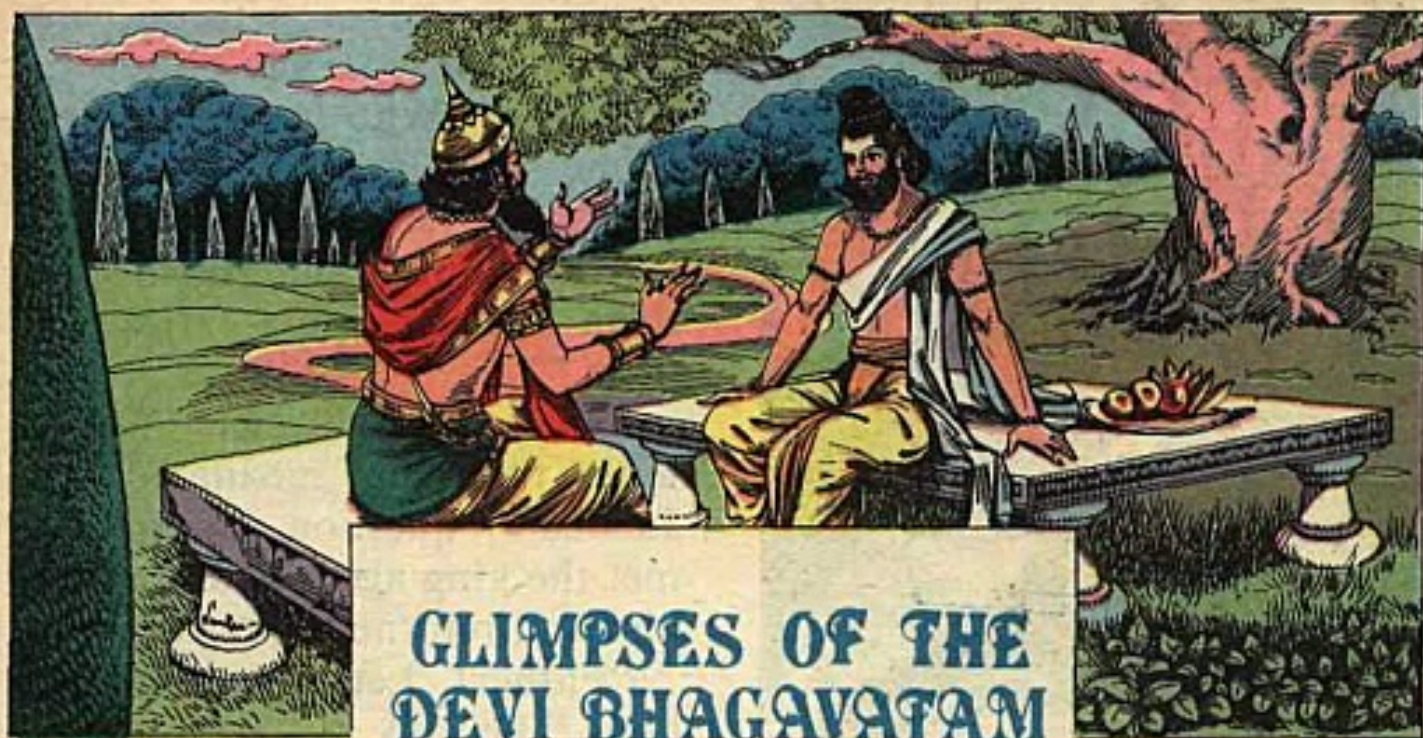
suggest that its owner had been dragged away by a tiger. I was surprised to see the box gone when I came out of the spring, but I did not give much thought to it!"

"My friend, as I understand, you are a needy man. What is the harm in your accepting this bundle?" Ashok asked.

"No, sir, had the money been meant for me, I should have opened the box and seen it before the box fell into your hands. I am happy with whatever my labour brings me. You can use the money for some better purpose," said the traveller and he stepped into the road again.

That very evening Ashok deposited the money with the village welfare committee for founding a library.





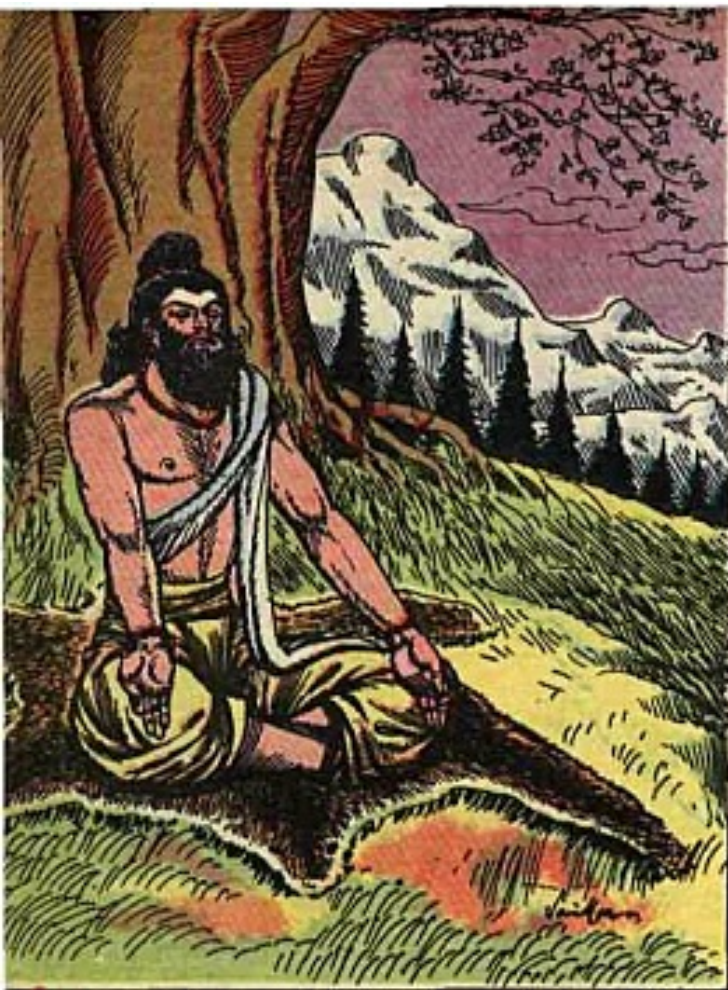
GLIMPSES OF THE DEVI BHAGAVATAM

In the course of his discussion with Janaka, Sukadev said, "O King, I have heard you with attention. You have said many things valuable. But I am not yet free from doubts. One who would marry and raise a family will naturally become bound to it. He would always be after worldly pleasures. When he gets them he is happy. When he does not get them he is disappointed. This is how his time passes. How can he achieve salvation?"

"One who is bound to his family is not destined to achieve salvation, true, but one who is wise is not required to be bound by it. One can remain in the

world, but with perfect detachment. One need not necessarily run after the false pleasures offered by life in the world," said Janaka.

"I do not understand how can one remain in the world and in a family, and yet be detached from both. One can claim himself free, but that does not truly make him free. Just as by remembering a lamp one is not able to remove darkness, so also by simply reading scriptures one does not get salvation. What is needed is *Tapasya*. You are a king. It is quite natural that you would be thinking of your kingdom, its prosperity, your successors, so on



and so forth. How then can you become detached? How can you get salvation with such attachments? It is different with me. I do not seek pleasure, I may not be touched by sorrow; I have no friend, no enemy, no desire for prestige, no humiliation either. I can pursue the path I like," said Sukadev.

King Janaka smiled and asked in a firm voice, "Do you think that one who has no responsibility of any kind, one who gets himself free from all duties, is eligible for salvation? Is it not difficult to remain amidst the objects of attraction and yet to be detached to them than to

hide oneself from the objects of attraction? Who is more strong—one who does not care for charming things though they surround him or one who avoids them because one is afraid of them?"

Sukadev kept quiet. For a long time he meditated on Janaka's question. Then he met the king again and thanked him and returned to Vyasa.

"Father! Let your will be done," he said.

Vyasa was pleased. He married Sukadev to a girl named Peevari. Sukadev was blessed with four sons: Gouradev, Devabrata, Vari and Krishna. A fifth child was a daughter named Keerti.

Keerti married Bivraj. The couple had a son called Brahma-dutta.

Brahmadutta was a seeker after true knowledge. Although a king, he was an ascetic within. In due course Narada showed him the path to enlightenment. He abdicated his throne in favour of his son and left for the holy Badarikashram. After his grandson's departure, Sukadev thought it high time for him to depart too. He retired to Kailash and left his body through unbroken medi-

tation.

Vyasa hurried to Kailash when he heard of his dear son's death. There he yearned to get a glimpse of his great son, but in vain. Later Siva appeared before him and tried to console him. But when Vyasa was found to be inconsolable the latter said, "The emanation of your son will always remain with you like your shadow."

This story was being narrated by Suta to a gathering of hermits in the forest.

"What happened to Vyasa thereafter?" asked the curious listeners."

Suta resumed his narration: Vyasa had already dispersed his disciples. Now his son too was gone. Wandering, Vyasa at last reached his mother Satyavati, after he got to know her whereabouts from a hunter.

As you know, Satyavati had been married to King Shantanu. She had given birth to two sons, Chitrangada and Vichitravirya. Shantanu's eldest son Bhishma was under the oath not to become king himself. That is why after Shantanu's death Bhishma coronated his brother Chitrangada. Unfortunately, once on a hunting spree, the young Chintrangada had a fight



with a Gundharva that caused his death.

Bhishma arranged for his other brother Vichitravirya to ascend the throne. It was then that Vyasa arrived on the scene.

Bhishma decided to get his brother married. He heard that the King of Kashi had three beautiful daughters. He proceeded to Kashi. The King of Kashi had convened a Swayamvara - an assembly of a number of eligible princes for his daughters to choose from them their bridegrooms. Bhishma claimed all the three princesses for his brother. The assembly of princes was up in arms against



him. But all of them together were no match for Bhishma.

Bhishma returned to his palace. Mother Satyawati was happy to see the three princesses. An auspicious moment for their marriage with Vichitravirya was fixed. But the eldest of the three princesses, Amba, told Bhishma privately, "I had chosen the king of Malva for my husband. He too loved me. I ought not to marry anybody else. It is your duty to lead me to him."

Bhishma was in a dilemma. He discussed the problem with Satyawati and his ministers. Then he sent Amba to Malva.

Delighted with the fulfilment of her wish, the princess told the king of Malva, "The noble Bhishma, granting my request, has sent me to you. Please arrange for our marriage."

Malva's face fell. "How can that be possible?" He asked with his head hung. "Bhishma took you away forcibly from the assembly of princes. Now to marry you would mean to become the object of Bhishma's pity. That would be humiliating for me. Better go back to Bhishma."

Princess Amba stood as if thunder-struck. She bewailed her fate and returned to Bhishma and said, "It is for you that Malva refused to marry me. Now you ought to marry me yourself."

"But that is impossible! I am under oath never to marry. I advise you to go back to your parents," said Bhishma.

But Amba did not go back to her parents. Instead, she continued to live in a forest. Her two sisters, Ambika and Ambalika married Vichitravirya.

Vichitravirya reigned happily for a while. Then he died untimely. There was of course no problem in the snooth running

of the kingdom. Bhishma, with the help of Satyawati and Vyasa, did the needful.

A son was born to Ambika, but he was found to be blind. He became famous as Dhritarastra. However, Ambalika gave birth to another son. In due course it is this second son, known as Pandu, who ascended the throne.

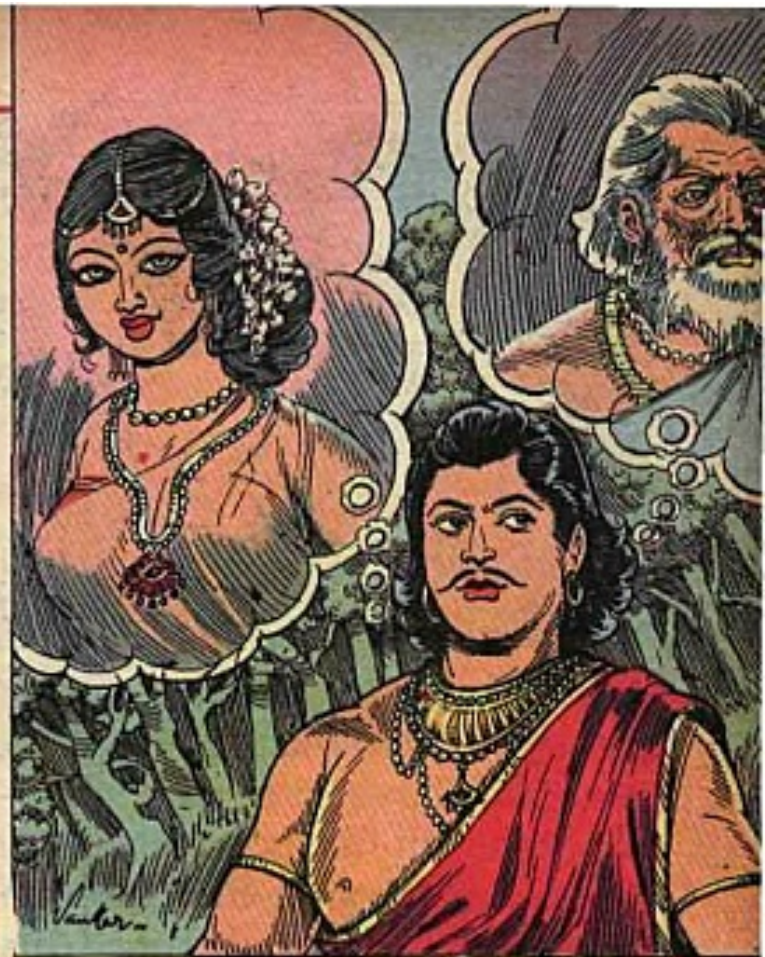
At this stage of the narration the hermits interrupted Suta, "You said that Vyasa was a son of Satyawati. How was that possible? Was Satyawati not married to Shantanu?" they asked.

Suta answered them:

Once the Chedi kingdom was ruled by a young king. The king had received a wonder chariot from Indra, the King of Heaven. The Chedi king loved to fly the chariot. He was popularly called Uparichara or the sky-wanderer.

One day Uparichara and his wife Girika were in their chariot, spending their time happily, enjoying the scenes of the streams and mountains below, when Uparichara's old father who lived a retired life rang the palace-bell calling them down.

"In a certain rite I want a deer. But the deer has to be



secured personally by you," said the old father.

Uparichara had to go forth into the forest immediately. He bagged a deer and entered a river for a bath. He remembered having come away from Girika rather abruptly and felt sad on that account.

A she-fish saw his sad face. She was moved by sympathy. The king's figure was reflected in both her eyes for a long time. As a result there grew a boy and a girl in her womb. In fact, the she-fish was a nymph.

"How did a nymph become a fish?" asked the hermits.

Replied Suta: "A nymph



Adrika by name, was bathing in the river Yamuna. She saw a Brahmin having a dip. Suddenly she felt like being naughty. She swum towards the Brahmin under the water and pulled his legs.

The Brahmin got a shock and cried out his horror. Adrika was amused. She giggled.

The Brahmin understood that someone was making fun of him.

"Become a fish!" he exclaimed.

Adrika realised the danger. She apologised to the Brahmin. The Brahmin softened "You

will be free from your condition after you have given birth to a human boy and a human girl," said the Brahmin. Since then Adrika had to live in the river as a fish.

One day the unusual fish was caught by a fisherman. Upon cutting the fish the fisherman was baffled to discover two infants inside it. He carried his finds to the king. The king took the boy. The fisherman took the girl. The girl was named Matsyagandha. Adrika, liberated from her curse, returned to her home in heaven.

(To continue)



"Mummy, what an exciting football match we had! But I broke an ankle!"
"O God, which ankle?"
"Not mine, luckily!"

ADVENTURES OF PERSEUS (1)

A prophecy warned Acrisius, the King of Argos, that he would be killed by the son of his daughter Danae. Acrisius interned Danae in a lonely castle.

But the god Zeus visited Danae in a shower of gold. He married her secretly. Danae gave birth to a lovely son. Soon the news reached the king.



Acrisius, unwilling to kill his daughter, put her and her child in a chest and set it adrift on the sea.



They were rescued by the sailor, Dictys who led them to Polydectes, the king of Seriphos. They were granted shelter.





Danae's son, Perseus, grew up to be a brave youth. King Polydectes, wishing to marry Danae, sent Perseus away to fetch the head of Medusa, a hideous monster, with hissing serpents for her hair.

All who looked upon Medusa turned to stone. From Goddess Athene, Perseus received a polished shield so that he could see Medusa through reflection.



On Mount Atlas lived three weird sisters who had only one eye and one tooth among them which they used by turn. Perseus snatched the eye and the tooth and obliged them to tell him where to find sandals that would enable him to fly.



Perseus flew on westward and saw Medusa, asleep with her two sisters, all known as the Gorgons. Perseus seeing only her reflection on his shield, successfully beheaded her.



naire



The Triumphant Girl

Sumi had lost her parents and was living in the family of her father's cousin, Jaidas. Neighbours said that Sumi's father had left a large sum of money with Jaidas; Jaidas had promised to give her higher education and to marry her off to the most eligible bridegroom.

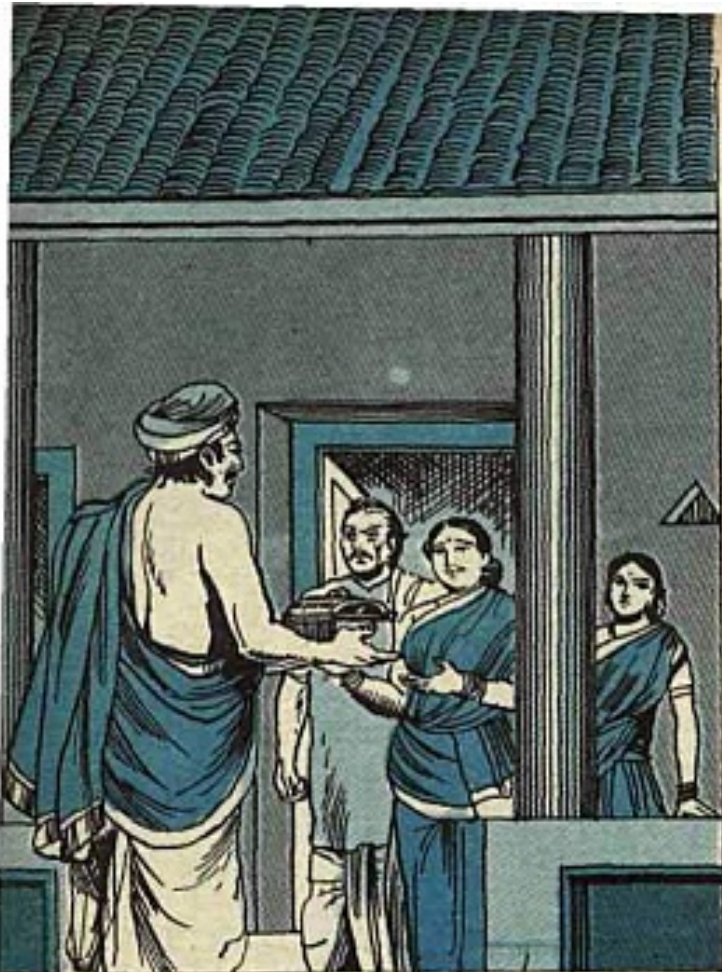
But he seemed to have forgotten his promises altogether. "Higher education spoils girls," said Jaidas. "That is right," agreed his wife, Lata. "Sumi knows how to read and write. That should do. Better I teach her lessons in household chores."

So, Sumi had to cook, clean the utensils, scrub the kitchen and sweep the floors. She did not murmur. Once in a while,

however, her friends saw her weeping, hiding herself from her guardians.

One day the landlord of the area came to see Sumi. He talked to her for a short time and looked extremely pleased. He told Jaidas, "I had heard much about Sumi from a friend. Now I am satisfied that whatever I had heard is true. If you have no objection, I will like to have her as my daughter-in-law. You know, my only son should be a good match for Sumi!"

Jaidas could not believe his ears. Was Sumi going to be that lucky? He marvelled at the proposal. "Well, sir, what about dowry? I am no rich,



The solution came most unexpectedly. In the evening a stranger met them. Giving a box to Jaidas, he said, "Guptaji asked me to tell you that the ornaments this box contains are worth twelve thousand rupees."

"Guptaji? Ornaments?" Jaidas hesitated.

"Why? This is Nathji's house, isn't it? Yes, yes, he told me that the house was situated behind the well, with the banian tree to the right. Are you not Nathji?" asked the man.

"Guptaji is right. You can go," said Lata, stepping forward.

They shut the door. "This is sent by Destiny. We can sell this at the price of gold and can get at least ten thousand rupees. You can tell the landlord that we agree to his demand," said Lata.

"Please don't do any such thing, aunty, evidently the man made a mistake. He might come back to claim it!" said Sumi.

"Shut up!" growled Jaidas, "How dare you poke your nose in our concern?"

"Nobody has seen our receiving the box!" commented Lata.

After some more discussion, the couple thought it wise to

you know....." he faltered out.

"I do not expect much. Ten thousand rupees in cash would do. Is that all right?" asked the landlord.

"Well, well, should you not give me a little time to think? I'll give my decision tomorrow," said Jaidas.

This was a formidable problem for Jaidas and his wife. Not that they could not afford ten thousand rupees for Sumi. Her father had left five times more than that. But they did not want to spend on her. At the same time, the temptation to become the landlord's relative was no less strong.

bury the box in the backyard. Jaidas was to take it to the town the next day.

Some one knocked on the door in the morning. Jaidas opened the door and saw the stranger.

"Sir, how I bungled up! The house where I was to deliver Guptaji's box is in the next street. Be pleased to return the box to me," said the stranger.

"Box? What box?" asked Jaidas.

"You are bungling up again. You must have delivered your box somewhere else!" said Lata.

"Please, sir, please, madam, don't be unkind to this poor servant! Imagine what my master will do to me!" appealed the stranger.

"He must be mad!" shouted Lata.

They were about to shut the door on his face when the landlord appeared on the scene.

"Jaidas, you failed in the test. I need no dowry. Nevertheless, I wanted to study your nature. That is why I sent those false ornaments. You and your wife are most mean fellows. Although I am impressed by Sumi, how can I believe that your nature has not influenced her? I call off my proposal," said the



landlord.

Sumi stepped forward instantly and said, "Sir! Each one has his or her own nature and individuality. Surely, I am not dying to marry. But you ought not to have formed an idea about me from the test which you put my guardians to. For your information, I dug out the box my guardians had buried and left it in the police station before it was morning. Please go and claim it."

The landlord looked amazed. He walked thoughtfully in the direction of the police station.

Jaidas and Lata looked grave. They did not talk to Sumi.



Sumi too felt sad, knowing that life for her will be hell hereafter.

She was returning from the well. She heard foot-steps behind her.

"Sumi, I'm the landlord's son. I knew nothing of the drama my father enacted. But, believe me, he is much impressed by you. He is feeling embarrassed

for suspecting your nature. You triumphed over all. Now, if you agree, we can marry," tenderly said the young man who followed her.

Sumi lowered her head and smiled. "I am so happy! I take your sweet silence for your consent," said the landlord's son.



"In *honest* 'h' ought to be silent!" The teacher had taught the boys several such principles of pronunciation.

One day they were in the airport when the boys excitedly shouted: "Here comes the Boeing! Here comes the Boeing!"

"Be silent!" said the teacher.

The boys changed their slogan to "Here comes the 'Oeing! Here comes the 'Oeing!"

RODENTS RUIN A TOWN

In 7th Century B.C. Abdera was a prosperous maritime town in Thrace. It is said to have been founded by the great hero, Hercules.

It was widely believed that those who breathed the air of Abdera grew stupid! But the town gave birth to some of the most celebrated Greek talents like Democritus and Anaxarchos, the philosophers.

If the rumour about stupidity did not affect the town, the menace of rats did! For some unknown reason the rat-population got a fabulous boost. They ate up all food and harassed everybody. They grew more and more menacing day by day. The people had to flee the town. The town lay deserted.

Its ruins, spread over seven small hills, can be seen to this day.



PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST



Mr. V. Krishna Rao



Ms. Bishan Maheswari

Can you formulate a caption in a few words, to suit these pictures related to each other? If yes, you may write it on a post card and mail to Photo Caption Contest, Chandamama, to reach us by 20th of the current month. A reward of Rs .25/- will go to the best entry which will be published in the issue after the next.

The prize for the January '81 goes to:

Mr. V. Srivatsan, B-2/101-D Safdarjang Enclave,
New Delhi 110 029.

The Winning Entry – 'Holding A handful' – 'Drinking a Mouthful'

PICKS FROM THE WISE

He that avoideth not small faults, by little and little falleth into greater.

—Thomas A Kempis

Fear not the anger of the wise to raise; Those best can hear reproof
who merit praise.

—Alexander Pope

The principal difference between a cat and a lie is that a cat has
only nine lives.

—Mark Twain

PAMPER THEM.

PAMPER YOURSELF.

"I don't mind doing homework now.
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with **Ravalgaon Eclairs**. I like
both the coco and the
coconut ones.

So does mummy. I saw
her eating some
quietly, quietly.

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5 Exciting Second Prizes

Free Air Fare for the child ex-Delhi, ex-Calcutta, ex-Patna. Free accommodation for the child and both parents on the 3-star package.

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